



YOU CAN VOTE

BC Election 2017


Information & Participation Guide

You Have The Right To Vote!
If you have a question about voting
you can contact Elections BC:

Toll Free: 1-800-661-8683 TTY: 1-888-456-5448
Email: electionsbc@elections.bc.ca
www.elections.bc.ca www.inclusionbc.org



inclusionBC



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Background and introduction to voting

This spring there will be a Provincial Election for the Government of BC. The election will be held on Tuesday, May 9, 2017.

During the election, each **political party** can put forward a candidate in every voting region or area (called **Ridings**).

You vote for the candidate you want. The candidate that gets the most votes becomes a **Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA)**. That MLA represents the people in your Riding. The party that gets the most MLA's elected forms the Government. The party with less MLA's elected forms the Opposition.

Voting allows you to choose who you think will best represent you and your community.



Your choice helps decide who will form the government in BC.



Everyone who is a Canadian Citizen, has lived in BC for the last six months and who is 18 years of age or older on voting day has the right to vote in this election.

This package gives you some ideas about how to get involved in the election. It explains some things about how an election works.

This package has:

- Written information in plain language and large print,
- A small poster that you can put up where people gather in your community.

Please share this information with your friends.

Voting for the first time can be a little scary because often people do not know what to expect. This guide will help you understand what voting is about and why it is important.

We hope this information will help make your voting experience a good one.

Questions & answers about voting



Who can vote?

Every person who is a Canadian citizen, 18 years or older on voting day and has lived in BC for the last six months can vote in this election if they are on the voters' list. You also have to live in the riding where you are voting.

How do I get on the voters' list?

If you are already on the voters' list you will receive a voting card in the mail. If you do not receive a voting card, call Elections BC (1-800-661-8683). They will tell you how to get on the voters' list.

If I am not on the voters' list on Election Day can I still vote?

Yes. If you do not get on the voters' list before the Election, you can register to vote at the polling station when you vote. However, there may likely be line-ups and you will need two pieces of I.D. with your name, address, and signature. They will accept Hydro bills, rent receipts, health cards, etc. Check this link to see the list of documents that are acceptable:

www.elections.bc.ca/index.php/voting/#ID

Can I vote on any other days?

Advance voting is available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on the Saturday and Sunday two weeks before May 9, 2017 (April 29 & 30, 2017). It is also available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on the Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of the week before **General Voting Day** (May 3 -6, 2017).



The BC Provincial Election is on Tuesday May 9th. Advanced voting is available on any of the highlighted days on the calendar.

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MAY 2017						
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Where do I vote on Election Day?

On Election Day you vote at a place called a “polling station”. The address of the polling station will be sent to you in the mail along with your voters’ card. **Polling stations** can be schools, town halls, or other places in your community where people gather. If you don’t get this information, call your Elections BC office and ask them where to vote.



What if I live in a hospital or group home?

All people who live in hospitals or group homes **have the right to vote**. Sometimes they send a “mobile polling station” to places like group homes and hospitals. Ask the staff if this is going to happen where you live.

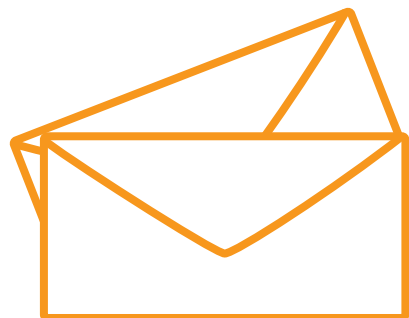


What if I need a ride?

- Ask a friend or person you trust to take you.
- Phone one of your local candidates and tell them you need a ride. You don’t have to vote for the person who gave you a ride.

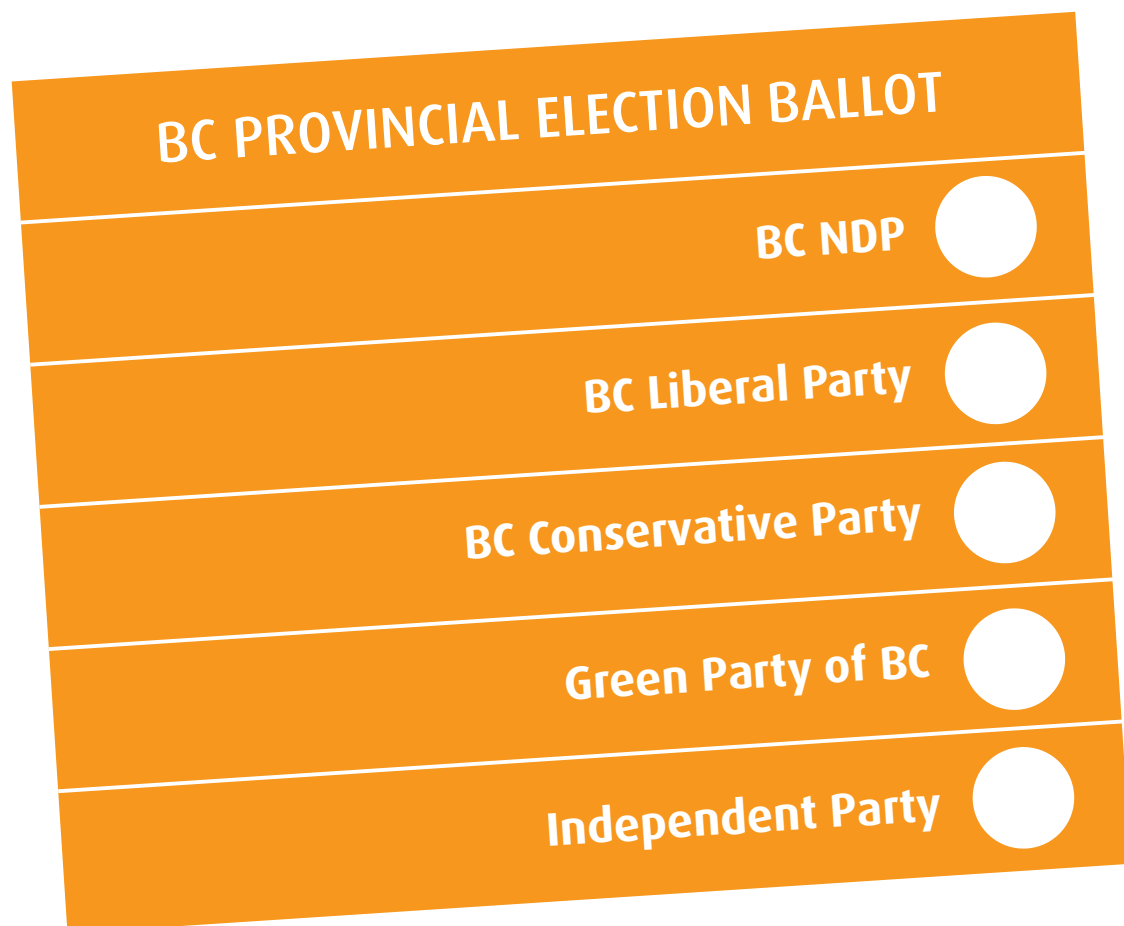
What if I still can’t get to the polling station to vote?

If the above options are not available to you or if you will be out of the province on Election Day or you just can’t make it down to vote, you may be able to vote by mail. This is called “absentee voting.” Phone Elections BC to see if you can vote by mail.



How do I vote at the polling station?

1. Take your I.D. or your voters' card to the polling station. You can bring either one piece of I.D. issued by the Government that has your name, photo and address **OR** you can bring two documents that have your name on them. One of those has to have your address too. Check this link to see the list of documents that are acceptable:
www.elections.bc.ca/index.php/voting/#ID
2. Someone will give you a piece of paper with the names of all the people you can vote for. This is called a "ballot".
3. Pick one person you want to vote for and put a mark (X) inside the circle beside their name. *If you have a visual impairment or if you are blind, you can get a special cardboard ballot with holes on it to make voting easier for you.*
4. After you mark your ballot put it in the box. Remember, you can only vote for one person. If you put more than one (X) on your ballot it will not count.



What if I need help when I vote?

You can bring someone you trust to help you vote, or ask one of the staff at the polling station to help you.

You can bring someone you trust with you to help you vote. The person you choose has to sign a **declaration** that they are there to assist the voter with a disability. Or, you can ask one of the staff at the polling station to help you. This person can read you the names or help you mark your ballot.

How do I get voting information?

Phone Elections BC and ask them to send you information. Tell them if you want: LARGE PRINT or digital information.

Visit the Elections BC website:

www.elections.bc.ca

VOTE = 

If you have a visual impairment you can get a special “Braille Template” (a special cardboard with holes on it to make voting easier for you). Also, you can get information on TV by watching the news. If you are deaf or hard of hearing, phone TDD/TTY: 1-888-456-5448

Elections BC is also on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Elections-BC/67197771286>



Political parties & their leaders

In this election, people vote for the person they want to speak for them in the Government of BC. This person usually belongs to a “political party”.

BC NDP	JOHN HORGAN
BC Liberal Party	CHRISTY CLARK
BC Conservative Party	TBD
Green Party of BC	ANDREW WEAVER

Every political party has a Leader, **but the Leader’s name is not on the ballot**. The ballot only has the name of the local person who is a candidate in your area and the name of the political party they are with.

There are many political parties registered in BC, but only four of those parties run candidates in almost every riding. There are also many candidates running as an independent, which means they don’t belong to any political party. Phone Elections BC or visit their website to find out which parties have candidates in your riding.

If you want to know more about the candidates who are running for election in your community, visit their campaign offices or go to an all candidates meeting. If you have access to the Internet you can look up websites for each party. These websites will have information on each party’s **platform**. A platform talks about what the party believes and the things that they will do if they are elected.

Participating in the election

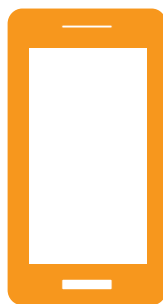
There are lots of ways to learn about voting and how the election works. Here are some ideas you can do on your own or with a group.



1. You can get together with a friend you trust and talk about how voting works.



2. Pay attention to the local TV news, radio stations, newspapers and Internet. They will have updates on the election campaign. They will also have regular election specials.
3. Self-advocates can get together and invite all the candidates to come and attend a "Question and Answer" meeting on your issues.
4. You and your friends can go to an "All Candidates Meeting" in your area to meet the candidates and ask questions on issues that are important to you.
5. You can practice voting by role-playing with pretend ballots.
6. You can call Elections BC and ask them for an election kit.
7. You can phone or email your candidates and get him or her to answer your questions.



8. You can visit all the candidates' offices in your area to see how they are running their campaigns; you can learn a lot and meet new people.
9. If you know who you want to vote for, you can volunteer to help them at their campaign office.
10. You can check out where your polling place is before Election Day.
11. The candidates and their helpers may come to your place to give you information and talk to you about why you should vote for them. This is OK, BUT you don't have to talk to anyone you do not want to. And you do not have to let anyone into your house who you don't want to talk with.
12. Be a letter writer. Tell candidates and newspapers about the issues that are important to you.



Rights & responsibilities

WHY SHOULD YOU VOTE?

Your right to vote is one of the most important rights you have. It is the way you help choose who will represent you in B.C.'s government. When you vote you are participating as a full citizen in Canadian society.

Your Rights

1. You have the right to get on the voters' list.
2. You have the right to vote.
3. Your vote is your personal choice.
4. Your vote is a **secret** - you don't have to tell anyone who you vote for if you don't want to.
5. You have the right to talk to the candidates and ask them questions and get answers in a way you understand.
6. You have the right to put a sign on your lawn or window for the candidate of your choice. You also have the right to refuse.
7. No one can tell you who to vote for.

Your Responsibilities

1. Get your name on the voters' list.
2. Find out who the candidates are.
3. Know the issues. Get the information you need.
4. Make plans to get to the place where you vote.
5. Bring your voter's card (or I.D.) with you when you go to vote.
6. If you need it, bring a friend you trust to help you vote.
7. Keep informed after the election is over. Find out if the person who got elected in your area is keeping the promises they made during the election.

What does it mean?

All Candidates Meeting:

A meeting where all the people who want to be elected come together to talk about the issues.

Ballot:

The piece of paper with the names of all the people who are trying to get elected in your area.

Candidate:

A person who is trying to get elected.

Declaration:

A document making something official.

General Voting Day:

The day most people go to vote. Also known as polling day.

MLA:

Member of the Legislative Assembly: the person who represents your Riding.

Platform:

What the party believes and the things that they will do if they are elected.

Political Party:

An organization which has certain ideas about how to run the province. A candidate usually belongs to a political party. For example, NDP, Liberal, Green, Conservative, etc.

Polling Station:

The place where you go to vote on Election Day.

Provincial Election:

Voting for the Government of B.C.

Provincial Government:

The people who are elected to manage the province of B.C.

Returning Officer:

The person in your community who is in charge of making sure the election is fair and everyone gets to vote.

Riding:

The area you live and vote in.

Voting:

Choosing the person you want to speak for you in the Government.





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TUESDAY
MAY 9, 2017

*It's Your Right
It's Your Choice*

Phone Elections BC for more information:

1-800- 661-8683 (this call is free)

www.elections.bc.ca

